



TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD Inland Wetlands Board

APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES

June 09, 2022

Members present: Patricia Sesto, chair; Alan Pilch, secretary; Tim Bishop, David Smith, Tracey Miller

Member Absent: Susan Baker, Vice chair; Chris Phelps.

Also present: Andrew P. Hally, wetland agent; Aarti Paranjape, office administrator; Jake Muller, Kate Throckmorton, William Andres, Douglas Carroll, Mark Amler.

I: Call to order

Ms. Sesto called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

II: Public Hearing:

- 1. IW-22-20, 112 Bennetts Farm Road,** Plenary Ruling application to replace pipe including removal of existing 48" CMP and stone headwalls with a new 4'x6' box culvert, wing walls and associated planting. *Owner: Town of Ridgefield. Applicant: Jake Muller.*

<https://ridgefieldct.viewpointcloud.com/records/82155>

Ms. Sesto stated she has visited the site. Mr. Hally read the list of documents submitted with the application.

Mr. Muller gave an overview of the project which involves replacing 48" rotted corrugated pipe. The pipe will be replaced by a 6'x4' box culvert. Slip lining the existing pipe was considered, but it wasn't feasible due to the very poor condition of pipe. The project involves road closure and the schedule for the work is therefore dictated by the adjacent school and park programs. The road would be closed for maximum of five days. The repairs can be categorized as an emergency repair as Bennetts Farm Road is a main route for emergency service vehicles in that area.

Mr. Andres, P.E. with Tata and Howard Engineering Company, continued the project description. After a hydraulic analysis of the existing culvert, the box culvert was selected. The capacity doubles with this box culvert, although the 25-year storm will still overtop the road as stormwater backs up due to undersized culverts and a dam just downstream.



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There will be new headwalls on the upstream and downstream side. The upstream end of the existing pipe is much higher than the downstream; this will be leveled with new box culvert. The leveled culvert will promote ponding and collection of sediment to create a natural bottom.

Ms. Sesto inquired about the alternatives and why the box culvert was chosen over a bottomless culvert.

Mr. Andres stated time constraints were the primary consideration. With a preformed box culvert, the road will be closed for 5 days. In contrast, the construction of bottomless culvert would take at least fifteen days because the concrete has to be formed in place and let to dry.

Mr. Muller added accessibility to emergency and medical services will be restricted while the road is closed and there is no short reroute available. The bottomless culvert construction will require the road to be closed for longer period which would prolong the period of time emergency vehicles are unable to use that road. The slip lining as planned few years back as a repair was not feasible given the condition of the pipe.

Ms. Throckmorton, Environmental Land Solutions, presented the wetland mitigation planting. The watercourse is a tributary to Saugatuck River. The disturbance will be minimum, with 500 square feet of the wetlands will be impacted. The vegetation on the upland stream side is dominated by non-native plants multiflora roses, phragmites, Asiatic bittersweet and will be removed. A cluster of eight trees, eight inch caliper will be removed and replaced with more sustainable shade trees. Due to the overhead wires, shadblow trees are proposed near the sidewalk. The area of disturbance will be stabilized with riprap. Dewatering is proposed to keep the area of work dry.

NDDB database and Conservation Commission inventory do not show any species of concern or endangered species.

Mr. Pilch inquired if there an opportunity to put natural soil at the bottom of about 4-6" to make a natural bed making it pseudo natural. He also asked how far the riprap will extend the downstream beyond the headwall.

Ms. Throckmorton stated that the bottom of the culvert is below grade and over time the bottom will fill eventually.

Mr. Andres said that the riprap would cover the area of disturbance in the right of way. The property downstream is private property will not be altered. Discussion ensued regarding the extent of riprap proposed and options for a more naturalized restoration and stabilization. The discussion concluded with the applicant assuring the board riprap



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will be limited to areas where erosion is a risk and jute netting with coir logs will be utilized as practical.

Public Hearing was closed at 7:46PM.

III: Application for Discussion:

1. **IW-22-20, 112 Bennetts Farm Road**, Plenary Ruling application to replace pipe including removal of existing 48" CMP and stone headwalls with a new 4'x6' box culvert, wing walls and associated planting. *Owner: Town of Ridgefield. Applicant: Jake Muller.*

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Following special conditions to be incorporated along with normal standard conditions:

- Work to be conducted in the month of August during minimum water flow. Any changes to the timing of work to be approved by staff.
- Extent of riprap to be assessed at time of installation for the purpose of limiting the extent as appropriate. Small plantings to be incorporated among the stone to accelerate revegetation.
- If the stream is not dry, stream flow will be diverted around the work and methodology is subject to staff approval.
- Natural stones and sand, with the depth of 6", will be placed in the culvert to mimic a riffle stream bottom.

Mr. Pilch motioned to approve the Plenary Ruling Application with above special conditions along with applicable normal special conditions and standard conditions. Ms. Miller seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Publication date is June 16 and effective date is June 17, 2022.

IV. Application for Receipt:

1. **IW-22-23, 131 Seth Low Mountain Road**, Summary Ruling application for violation of excavating, grubbing and filling within the wetlands and a corrective application involving remediation including planting and stabilization. *Owner/Applicant: Lee Bussinger.*



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Ms. Sesto motioned to receive IW-22-23. Ms. Smith seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Sitewalk will be on June 12 and discussion on June 23, 2020.

V: Other Business:

1. Rainbow Lake Sediment removal. % Douglas Carroll.

Ms. Sesto stated Board members were to visit the site to assess the impact of sediment removal and dewatering and that Board needs to determine if the scope of work of proposed will require a new permit or can be covered within the prior approval.

Ms. Miller stated that the dewatering bags will be located within the wetlands which would be concerning.

Mr. Pilch inquired if grading is involved. He added the nature of work is different from earlier permit.

Ms. Sesto stated that the extent of questions and concerns of the members the Board regarding the grading and restoration indicates the existing permit is insufficient to consider the expanded dredging as a field change. The conditions of the prior approval cannot be altered to accommodate the new work. Accordingly, the Board concluded that the applicant should submit a new permit.

VI. Approval of Minutes:

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: May 12, 2022**

Ms. Miller motioned to approve the approval above minutes. Mr. Bishop seconded. Mr. Pilch abstained. Motion carried 4-0-1.

- **Inland Wetlands Meeting: May 26, 2022**

Mr. Pilch stated the minutes in correctly attribute his comments regarding the NRV as the position of the whole of the Board when they should be attributed just to his opinion.

Mr. Bishop motioned to approve the approval above minutes as amended. Ms. Miller seconded. Motion carried 5-0-0.

- **Sitewalk Meeting: June 05, 2022**



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Mr. Pilch motioned to approve the approval above minutes. Ms. Miller seconded. Motion carried 3-0-2 with Ms. Sesto and Mr. Bishop abstaining.

VII. Adjourn

Mr. Hally updated the Board about the product spill at the waste water treatment facility near a wetland pocket. State DEEP was at the site for cleanup. The spill was not noticed in the standing water. He added that AECOM is replacing the invasive species and replanting in the wetlands and that the cleanup is part of their restoration.

Hearing no further business, Ms. Sesto adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Aarti Paranjape
Recording Secretary